

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Not to be

ABUSED:

O R,

Antient and Primitive Truth Cor-
recting some Modern, or New Abuses,
of that which is so much Pleaded for,
and so little Understood, *viz.*

Christian Liberty,

I N

A SERMON

Preached in the Church of *Bridport*
within the County of *Dorset*, on Sun-
day the Forenoon, being *November 3. 1672.*
before the Magistrates of that Burrough.

By *Rich. Luce*, a Presbyter of the Church of
England by Law Established.

London, Printed for *Rowland Reynolds* at the
Sun and Bible in the *Poultry*, 1673.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

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**To the Reverend, and his much ho-
noured Friend and Neighbour,
Mr. Nathaniel Godwyn Rector of
Bridport.**

Reverend Sir,



Our benevolent Admission of me to
Preach in your Church, to gratifie
my good Friend Mr. *George Spen-
cer*, one of the present Bayliffs
of your Town, hath put me up-
on a little more Labour than I
expected. Yet I do not so much lay the
blame upon your Admission, which I pro-
nounce free from blame; as upon the over-
imprudence of some, whose Tongues being
liquoured with the Oyle of Confidence, have
charged me with Rayling against the *Kings*
Churches in my Sermon. An odious Con-
tumely indeed. What! for a son of the
Church of England to revile the Gods, and
speak evil of the Ruler of his People? To
fault the Edicts of his Sovereigne, The Fa-
ther of his Countrey. And in a word, the
the nursing Father of this Church? *Sir*, now

I declare unto you plainly, whom I am bound notwithstanding to honour as a Father, that you are highly concern'd. Concern'd indeed, that you would let me pass unchastised for profaning your Pulpit by so rude a Declaration, wherein as is reported, I was so unpardonably faulty. But *sin*, seeing it is the usual practise of those who neither understand their duty to God, or the King, to abuse and traduce with all malice imaginable those who hinder the building of their *Babel*: I am resolved, in steed of any other Apology, to expose my Sermon to your own judicious Examination. And lest you should be thought to be over partial to your friend, I know not what you can doe less, then bring the Author and his Sermon to a fair Trial. So without any more wordes, when you have perused the Sermon which was preached before your self, If you think it worth the Publication, you may doe as you think fit with it, and in order thereunto you may Command,

Chediock,

Nov. 18.

1672.

Your most affectionate Friend and
Fellow-labourer in the service
of God, King, and Church,

Richard Luce.

To

To the Worshipful, and Loyal Bayliffs
and Magistrates of the Borough of
Bridport, in the County of Dorset,
Salvation in Christ.

Gentlemen,

I Here present that Sermon unto your eyes, which
was Preached unto your Ears in your Parish
Church, on the 3d. of this Instant November.
I might have saved myself and you that labour,
had not some Tongues charged me with railing at the
Kings Church; for some so are pleased to call their
New Erected Congregations in Contradistinction to the
Church of England, Established by the known Laws
of this famous Kingdome. Sirs, If I have spoken
~~amiss in any part, or parcel of the ensuing discourse,~~
bear witnes against me: but if I have discharged my
Conscience so far as became a Loyal Subject to his
Majesty, and an obedient Son of the Church of Eng-
land, no way Thwarting his Majesties Declara-
tion in indulging his loving Subjects, and wherein
Himself hath declared his expresse Resolution, Mean-
ing, and Intention to be, That, the Church of Eng-
land be preserved, and remain entire in its Doctrine,
Discipline, and Government, as now it stands Estab-
lished

lished by Law. And this betaken to be, as it is, the
Basis, Rule, and Standard of the general and publick
worship, &c. You will be pleased to take this my
humble Prostration of this ensuing Sermon, as a sin-
cere acknowledgment of my Obedience to his Majesty,
and all that are put in Authority under him, both in
Church and State; and as a pledge of my hearty love
to the publick Peace, as well as to your selves, whom
with all that call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus
Christ in sincerity, I commend to your gracious di-
rection and protection of Almighty God, in whom I
Rest

Chedioc, Novem-
ber the 18th.
1672.

Your most affectionate
Friend and Servant,
R. Luce.

CHRI



CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Not to be

ABUSED.

*1 Pet. 2. 16 As free, and not using your
(or as the Original imports) not having
the Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but
as the Servants of God.*



HE that goeth about to Per-
swade a Multitude (saith
the most renowned and ju-
dicious *Hooker*) that they
are not so well Governed
as they ought to be, shall
never want attentive and
favourable Hearers. Which
comes to pass, (as that learned and godly Divine
observed) because they know the manifold de-

*Mr. Richard
Hooker, lib. 1.
Eccles. Polit.
pag. 1.*

B sects

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fects whereunto every kind of Regiment is subject, whiles yet they have not the Judgment to consider the secret Letts and Impediments, or Difficulties, which in publick proceedings are innumerable and inevitable. And because (as he adds) such as reprove supposed disorders of state, are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men that carry a singular freedome of mind under this plausible pretext, whatsoever they utter, passeth for good and currant. That which wanteth in the waight of their speech, is supplied by the aptness of mens minds to accept and believe it: whereas on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices rooted in the hearts of men, who think, that herein, we serve the Time, and speak in favour of the present State for our own advantages, but also to bear such exceptions, as minds so prepossessed with prejudice, usually take against that which they are loath should be poured into them.

However, it may happen to my self at this time in such a Chrysis of distempered humours in the minds, both of the *Masculine* and *Feminine* Gender, I shall not be curiously inquisitive.

Though I durst not stand in *Corahs* Tents, nor with his *Rebellious Associates*, affront *Moses* and *Aaron*; the King and the Priest, Prince and Prelate with, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation is holy: And though I presume

not

not in the least to Caviil against Acts of Parliament, nor Edicts of Council-Table, nor rudely to declaim against my Superiours or their sanctions, to vent crude Politicks, and impose them upon the Weak and Credulous : Yet as the case stands, you cannot take it amiss at his hands, who hath very much Charity for your Souls, if whiles he bespeaks you as Christs Free-men, yet admonisheth you in the Language, not of himself, but of the Holy Ghost, by blessed St. *Peter* in my Text, as free, and not using (or not having) the liberty for a Cloak of Malitiousness, but as the Servants of God.

If you look back into the precedent part of this Epistle, you will find the Apostle setting forth the Priviledges and Dignity of our high and Heavenly calling of Christianity. For that we are a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, &c. by reason of our Redemption purchased by Christ Jesus our Lord. To this end compare the 9th. verse of this Chapter, out of which my Text is selected, with the first Chapter throughout, especially with the 18th. and 19th. verses, &c. of that same Chapter.

Now lest that these priviledges should make us grow Proud and Insolent, and forgetful of our duty towards men, under pretence of our near Relation unto God : The blessed Apostle St. *Peter*, after he had pressed the Exercise of our Sanctification, both in abstaining from, and utter Re-

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nuntiation and Detestation of all fleshly Lusts, and Infernal Powers which War against the Soul; as also in leading of an honest and upright Life and Conversation amongst the very Gentiles, to the glory of God, and the vindication of the Doctrine of the Gospel of Christ, from the virulent Tongues of all malicious Detractors, and pernicious Calumniators, *ver. 11, 12.*

He proceeds in especial manner to give us direction, so well as command, concerning submission, or subjection, and obedience to all lawful Authority; whether it be to the King as Supream, or unto Governours as sent by him for the punishment of Evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, *verse 13, 14.* and to this purpose he adds his Reason, *verse 15.* For so is the Will of God, that with well doing, ye should put to silence the Ignorance of Foolish men, and not without need; seeing that no sooner was the Christian Religion planted in the World, but on a sudden the Prince of Darkness, the Devil, and Satan, finding his Dominion broken and routed, endeavoured by all means possible to disturb the free and happy passage of the Gospel, both by procuring open Persecutions to be raised against the Church, and true Professors of our most holy Christian Religion; as also by raising and stirring up divers false Brethren from at home, and within the very bowels of the Church, who spake and vented divers perverse things, both contrary to the Doctrine and Fundamental grounds of the Holy

holy Christian Faith, so well as to the Peace and tranquillity of the Communion of Saints. Neither had he any device more apt for his purpose, then a pretence that Christianity was destructive to Magistracy, whereby he incensed all that were in Authority, with a very severe jealousy against the Truth of Christ, though yet our Lord himself, had declared openly, *that his Kingdom was not of this World, John 18. 36.* But of all the Impostors that ever I meet with in this kind, I find none more notorious and dangerous, then *Simon Magus*: who, (as the Learned and Pious Dr. *Hammond* notes in his Proenical dissertation concerning Anti-Christ, Chapter the ninth) was the ring-leader of the Sect of the *Gnosticks*.

This is he who in the Acts of the holy Apostles, Chap. 8, 10. was held in high esteem amongst the People, who blasphemously called him the great power of God. By him they had been long and long deceived, and bewitched with Sorceries and Magical Enchantments. And now he finding his Trade of Imposturage, or Couſenage, to decay by the propagation of Christianity, this very *Simon* enrolls himself under the Banner of our Lord Jesus Christ by Baptism, *Act. 8. 11.* *Simon* himself (saith that Scripture) believed also, and when he was baptized, he continued with *Phillip, &c.* This he did as appears by the Sequel of that Chapter, not so much out of any true zeal, or love, which he did bear towards Christianity,

as in hopes to have made a gainful Trade of it: For when he saw that his expectation was frustrated this way, he with his Followers, forsook the way of Christ; and first of all, they relinquishd all the Orthodox, and pure Professors of the Christian faith; and by this Schism, they break the Union of the Church. *Εξ ημεν ἔσχατοι*
They went out from us, saith St. *John* in his first Epistle, Second Chapter, nineteenth Verse. Neither would they remain any longer in the bosome of the holy Christian Catholick and Apostolick Church. And thence having broken the Churches Unity, they did forthwith cast off all Charity towards their Brethren, and Fellow Christians.

From whence the Apostle and beloved Disciple of our Lord concludes, *1 John* 4. 8. compared with the second Chapter of that Epistle, Ver. 9. That however they did pretend to greater light and knowledg in Heavenly Mysteries, &c. then others; yet that they were a Company of self-conceited, blind, foolish, and prodigious ignorants. Hence saith Saint *John*, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is love. And he that saith, he is in the light, and hateth his Brother, is in darkness; even until now.*

And indeed, against these *Aynskites*, rather then *Gnosticks*; Ignorants, rather then Persons of Knowledg; we find both Saint *Paul*, and Saint

Saint Peter, Saint John, and Saint Jude, directing their discourses throughout their several Epistles. Amongst many others, take that in 1 Tim. 6. 3. &c. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not unto the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, He is proud, knowing nothing: but doting about questions, and strifes, of words whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, Evil-surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that Gain is Godliness: from such withdraw thy self. Such men these were, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, Jude the fourth verse. Inasmuch that they denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ: These were the Monsters, in the faith of whom, Saint Peter fore-warns the Christian flock, 2 Pet. 2. 1. &c. when he saith, There shall be false Teachers amongst you, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious wayes, by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through Covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make Merchandise of you: whose judgement now of a long time lieth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. These were the evening or devouring Wolves, of whom our Saviour speaks, Matth. 7. 15. And the false Christs that should come and deceive many, Matth. 24. 24. Those are the Dogs Saint Paul bids

This Ignatius
was, as is said,
that Child
which our Lord
took up in his
own Arms,
Mar. 10. 13.
Euseb. lib. 1.
Eccles. Hist.

Justin Martyr
in Quest. &
Respond ad
Orthodoxos.

us beware of, in Philip. 3. 2. And Ignatius in his
Epistle to the Ephesians, calls them *Ravenous Dogs*,
because, whiles they feigned themselves to be
Jews (i. e.) Circumcised, and Zealors for the Mo-
saical Circumcision; yet did they not keep the
Law, but only under this pretence, tear in pieces
the Church of Christ: And therefore it is most
plain what St. Peter drives at, both in my Text,
and in 1 Pet. 4. 17. when he saith, *The time is
come that Judgment must begin at the House of God,*
(i. e.) wherein the more Orthodox and purer Chris-
tians and Professors of the Holy Catholick Faith
were to suffer all manner of Evils, both from
the Jews and Gnosticks, for the sake of the
Gospel of Christ. For as Justin Martyr notes,
It was usual for the Hereticks of those times, to
Condemn those that would not say, and think
as they did. And therefore St. Paul in his
Valedictory Sermon to the Elders of the
Church of Ephesus, calls them *Wolves*, Act. 20.
who by their Heretical Do-
ctrines, and Seditious practices did make spoyle
of the Flock of Christ. For whiles they pre-
tended nothing more than Liberty, yet they did the
more entangle themselves and their followers in
the bondage of Corruption, 1. 2. Pet. 2. 18, 19.
And hence four Principal Errours in those
Gnosticks offer themselves to Correction as
well as Observation.

First,

First: Their Magical Enchantments.

Secondly: Their allowance of all manner of Sensualities, and fleshly Lusts, and mixtures, even to the Community, or rather defilement of the Marriage-Bed.

Thirdly: Their Exempting themselves from the Yoke of all Authority, both Civil and Sacred.

Fourthly and lastly: They held Circumcision to avoid Persecution for the Cross of Christ. By all which they prostituted the Holy Christian Religion, both in its Doctrinals and Devotionals, Morals, and Evangelicals to shame and contempt, under pretence of Liberty. And to hold you no longer from the design of our Apostle in my Text, St. Peter here wipes off the Reproach which these Impostors endeavoured to cast upon the Name of Christ, under pretence of Liberty purchased by him; when he saith, *οἱ ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικαλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, ἀλλ' ὡς δούλοι θεοῦ.* *As free, and not using, or not having the Liberty for a Cloak of Malitiousness, but as the Servants of God.* Wherein you may hear our Apostle speaking unto us to this effect; namely, Let none of you whom Christ hath purchased by his most precious blood, to enjoy so many high and eminent privileges, as to be an Holy Nation, a Royal Priest-hood, a peculiar people, &c. Think that hereby you are exempted from your duties, whether with

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reference towards God in the duties of the first Table, or towards men, required in the duties of the second Table of the Ten Commandments, to the performance of all which, we are firmly bound by Divine injunction. In especial manner, assure your selves, that the Doctrine of Christianity teacheth nothing more effectually, then that you ought to submit your selves unto every Ordinance of man, for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as Supream, or unto Governours, as sent by him for the punishment of Evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the Will of God, &c. If you plead your Freedome, know that your Freedome, in, and by Christ Jesus our Lord, doth not consist in believing, and living as you list your selves; nor in any exemption from Obedience unto lawful Authority. No! For our Lord himself, though Heir in Right to the Crown and Scepter of *Judah*, by temporal discent from the loynes of *David*, so well as Prince of the Kings of the Earth by his Eternal Power and God-head; yet rather than he would give occasion of offence whiles he was living, or leave a suspicious Example of any ill-meaning in his Doctrine or practice after his departure from this world (as to Personal or Corporeal presence) Himself I say, would rather work a Miracle, and pay Tribute unto *Cæsar*, for himself and *Peter*, Math. 17. 25. &c. to the end of that Chapter. To shew that his Disciples after him, under no pretence what-

whatsoever, should plead immunity in that or the like Case : much less may any Christian under any pretence of Liberty, vail or cover over Treasonable Imaginations or Practises against their Superiours ; but as Holy Church hath taught us devoutly to Pray, so let us be careful to practise, (i. e.) We must faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him, in, and for the Lord, according to his blessed Word and Ordinance : As duly considering that the King is Gods Vice-gerent, and that all other Magistrates, who are Commissionated by, and under him, do bear derivatively and subordinately an Impress of the Divine Image and Superscription ; *As free, and not having the Liberty for a Cloak of Malitiousness, but as the Servants of God.*

Many Observations offer themselves to our Consideration out of this Portion of Holy Writ, but I shall confine my self to shew you briefly.

First : What Christian Liberty is, and wherein it doth consist.

Secondly : How it ought not to be abused as a Cloak or Covering of any lewd Principles or wicked Practises. And for the better help of your memories, I shall reduce both into one Doctrine or Proposition.

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Dist. That it is altogether inconsistent with, and contrariant unto the Holy Christian Religion, for the Professors thereof, under pretence of Liberty to Cloak and colour over Malice and Wickedness. Or, more briefly, Christian Liberty must not be Abused to any wicked practises; especially against lawful Authority.

This position flowes naturally from the Text, which is inserted by way of Anticipation to prevent an obvious Objection.

Obiect. If we are Christs Freemen (*i.e.*) Purchased and Redeemed by his most precious Blood, and free Denizens of Heaven, &c. What obedience or subjection do we owe to any person, or power upon Earth, &c.? The Apostle Answers this by shewing, from the Rule of correlatives, what our Christian Liberty is; and wherein it doth consist: For,

*Quanam sit
libertas Christi-
ana.*

Our Christian Liberty is this; namely, that we being delivered from the hands of our Enemies (*i.e.*) from Sin, Hell, and Satan; we should serve God truly in Righteousness and Holiness all the days of our lives; *Luk. 1. 74, 75.* So that if any one would be informed, what's our Liberty? my answer would be: It is a Freedom to serve God; to observe and do what he hath commanded us. This is the sum and scope of the Gospel of Christ: to teach us to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called,

Eph. 4.

Eph. 4. 1. so Tit. 2. 11, 12. The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World: and this in especial manner is one way whereby we vindicate the honour of our high and holy Calling, and shew forth the praises of him that hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light; namely, by submitting our selves unto every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake; whether it be to the King as Supream, or unto Governours, as sent by him, &c. *As free, and not having Liberty for a Cloak of Malitiousness, &c.*

Freemen we are indeed! But we must remember, that the Liberty of the Lords Freemen in this life; is spiritual and inward; not bodily and outward; until the life to come. And therefore the best definition which can be given of our Christian Liberty, with relation unto this present life, is that which our Holy Mother, the Church of *England* hath taught us, and fitted to my hands in her Collect for peace, where-after she teacheth us to pray; *O God who art the Author of Peace, and Lover of Concord in knowledg, of whom standeth our Eternal Life; she addeth, whose Service is perfect Freedome:* whence it is easie to define, That the service of God, is the Christians perfect Freedom, or Liberty in this present world; or, a Christians most perfect Liberty in this world; is Gods service; and this is agreeable

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Plinius Junior

able to the Apostolical Dialect in my Text, where St. *Peter* calls Christians, Gods Servants, or the Servants of God. And St. *Paul* takes it as the height of his glory on this side of Heaven, that he had God for his Witness, whom he served with his Spirit in the Gospel of his Son, *Rom. 1.9.* and good reason, seeing, as he saith else-where, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty, 2 Cor. 3. 17.* And surely Beloved, it was never better with Christianity, then when *Pliny* the Heathen wrote to *Trajan* the Emperour, to whom he could give no other description of her Professors, than that they did rise before day, and sing Hymnes unto Christ, whom they Worshipped as God; and for better discipline among them, they prohibited Murther, Theft, Adultery, Fraud, Rebellion, Perfidiousness, and the denial of goods Committed to their trust, with other such like dishonest and ungodly pranks. And for this Reason, *Fustian Martyr* in his second Apology for the Christians in his time, complains of over-hard measure and usage against the poor Christians, in that after the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Devils had produced some men, who affirmed themselves to be Gods; and those, saith he, of you Gentiles, ὅτι μόνον καὶ ἐδιδόχθησαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑμῶν κατήξισθησαν. Not only do not suffer Persecution, but are dignified with Honours and Promotions. In a word then, the Holiness of Christianity, is such, that it doth not admit so much as an evil thought against the Magistrate, whether Supream or Subordinate. Curse not the King, no not in thy thought, nor the Rich in thy bed-chamber, &c. was good Doctrine

Doctrine in *Solomons* dayes, and is, and should be so in ours, *Eccles.* 10. 20. It forbids all irreverent speeches towards them, or concerning them. Hence *St. Paul* corrects himself, *Act.* 23. 5. I wist not, Brethren, that he was the High Priest; for it is written, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people*; and concerning Resistance of them by Treasonable Plots, or open Armes, there can be nothing more directly said against it, than what the Holy Ghost hath left upon Scripture-Record, under the hand of the same Apostle *St. Paul*, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2. &c. "Let every Soul be subject unto the Higher Powers; for, there is no power but of God; the Powers that be, are Ordain'd of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, purchase to themselves Damnation. We have frequent instances to this purpose of Gods justice in cutting off Rebels from the Land of the Living; we see it in *Gorah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, *Numb.* 16. at large. *Who ever took the Sword in hand, without Gods Command, but he perished by it? What Sheba, or Adonijah, ever blew a Trumpet of Sedition, or Rebellion, but they did this against their own lives? When David would have spared Rebellious Absolom, The Lord caused him to be hung in the mid'st of an Oak, between Heaven and Earth, as unworthy of either, because he Rebelled against his Royal Father: Yea, Wicked Jezebel had so much observed the method of Divine Justice, that she could demand boldly, Had Zimri Peace, who slew his Master? 2 King. 9. 31. Our*

2 Sam. 20.

3. &c.

1 King. 1. & 2.

Chapters.

2 Sam. 18.

9. &c.

OWN

Dr. Taylor, in
his Commentary
on Tit. 2. 1.

See the Elder-
Bishop Carle-
ton's thankful
remembrance
of Gods mercy.

own Chronicles (as Doctor *Thomas Taylor* ob-
served long agoe) are full of rare examples of
Gods judgments, upon not a few of such Mon-
sters, and Miscreants. The strange discovery of
the *Percyes Conspiracy*, and that of the *Gun-
powder Treason*, are such remarkable Monuments
of Gods Vengeance against Traytors, as may ne-
ver be forgotten, to the perpetual shame of the
new Romish - Religion; but will stand upon re-
cord, (unless Posterity be over-ungrateful) to the
end of Time. Neither let that unparalleled Vil-
lany, committed against the Sacred blood of our
late Royal Martyr King *CHARLES* the First,
of blessed Memory, nor the just vengeance of
God upon the Actours, in that horrid Tragedy,
be ever blotted out from under Heaven. Neither
is this only an humane invention, or observati-
on, but an infallible extract, and conclusion expre-
sly set down in the Holy Scriptures of Almighty
God, *Prov. 24. 21, 22. My Son, fear thou the
Lord and the King, and meddle not with them
that are given to change, or with the seditious.
For their destruction shall arise suddenly, and who
knoweth the ruine of them both?*

Were I minded to common-place it at large
on this Theam, I should be over-burthensome
to your patience: wherefore for brevities sake,
I shall lay down, two or three of the most perti-
nent Arguments, to press home what hath been
said, and so proceed to the Application.

Rea-

Reason 1. God himself hath ordained Magistracy; by me Kings reign, and Princes decree justice, Prov. 8. 15. So Nebuchadnezzar confesseth, Dan. 4. 14. That the most High hath power over the Kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever He will. And Saint Paul layeth it down for good Christian Doctrine, the Powers that be, are ordained of God, Rom. 13. 1. Who then can without prodigious guilt take the sword out of the Princes-hand? or deprive him of that which he owes to none but God himself alone, namely, his Crown and his Life?

Reason 2d. God hath been pleased to honour them with his own Name, whom he hath raised up unto place of Authority; that so they might be had in due honour, and esteem, according to their place and dignity, Psal. 82. 6. I have said ye are Gods, and all of ye children of the most high. Wherefore how durst any presume without horrid impudence, to affront, or withstand, those whom the King of Heaven hath so highly honoured? Note, only let the Magistrate here remember, that though he be as it were a God by Office, yet that he is but a man by Essence; and therefore I may be bold to put you in mind of that too, *Ye shall dye like men.*

Reason 3. God setteth a stamp upon Magistracy, no less then an Impresse of his own Majesty, Mercy, Justice, and Wisdome on those visible Deities, and little Gods on Earth; yea, a

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. great

great part of his Image shineth upon every one of them. As for instance, let me begin with the State of Sovereign Princes. And here what a radiant body of a kind of Omnipotent Splendour, like as in the solar beams displays it self, and spreads its rayes, from the Seat and Throne of Majesty: both in that so many Hundred Thousands are subjected to the power of one, and in that, the whole administration of a numerous People is in one hand, and that the good estate of all, dependeth on one alone under God. So the inferior Magistrates, or rather, those whom the Sovereign Power of the Prince, hath put in Authority under him, according to the Laws, and Statutes, Customs and Constitutions of his Realms. Those, I say, by virtue of their Commissions, and Charters, receive a kind of an Impress of the Princes Majesty and Authority, which as loyal Subjects, and faithful Administrators, of Law, and Justice, they are to improve for the glory of God, the preservation of the publick peace, according to the Laws of God, and the known Laws of the Realm. And who then is that Son of Belial, that durst set himself in opposition to so solemn and sacred a sanction? or what company of men, durst violate so Divine a constitution? Surely God will take this one day, as an high affront done to himself: and if any will be so impudent as to despise their Superiours, whether in Church or State, they may expect to hear that in 1 Sam. 8. 7. applyed against themselves, *They have not rejected Thee, (i. e.) the law.*

lawful Superiour, But they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. God takes the dishonour which is done to those, whom he hath placed in Authority over us, as done to himself; and this Refractory, disobedient shall know one day, both to their great grief, and extreamest horror; unless God of his infinite mercy, grant them repentance, unto the humble and hearty acknowledgment and amendment of their most lew'd and wicked Error.

Object. But what need all this adoe? *Ad quid perditio hac?* To what end is all this wast? we are Freeman, we have a liberty, &c. to serve God according to our Conscience, and what hath any man to say against it?

Solut. Ay! and have you a Liberty indeed? A Liberty, I say? Well said. But for what I pray you? What! to say and do what you list? I hope not so. But if any of you durst think so, or take it so: I pray God you may see your mistake in time before it be too late. You have a Liberty. you say, to serve God according to your Conscience. I pray God when He shall call us all to a strict accompt, and reckoning, that, that same thing which some call Conscience, do not appear to be meer Humour and Obstinacy. For they can shew us no grounds in all the World, why their *Enthusiasmes* should be called the service of God. And now, I am come so far, as to meet some who are hugely taken up with their New-erected

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Meetings, neither may I baulk them, though I must tell you, I quarrel not with his Sacred Majesty's Indulgence: yet I cannot chuse, but pity their ignorance, who so manifestly abuse it. For let me demand of any Person breathing, who dislikes the publick communion of the Church of England: that refuse to joyn with us in prayers and praises, in the service of God, appointed in this Church, in the hearing of the Word of God read and preached, and in the participation of the blessed Sacraments: I pray you upon what terms do you hold Communion one with another, in your New-erected Congregations, or Societies, if you do not openly and solemnly declare in the same Societies, and solemn Meetings of yours, That you do renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pumps and Vanities of the wicked World, all the sinful lusts of the flesh, all the carnal desires of the same; so as not to follow, nor be lead by them? do you profess openly, and solemnly, your belief of all the Articles of the holy Christian Faith? And do your Speakers read unto you the Moral Law? Do they call you to the obedience of Gods holy will and commandments? And do they press you earnestly to walk in the same all the dayes of your lives? do they press you, and call upon you, to confess dayly and hourly your sins unto Almighty God, with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; to the end, that you may obtain forgiveness of the same by his infinite goodness and mercy? do they teach you to pray, and sue

sue earnestly and heartily, for the pardon of the many breaches and violations of Gods Law, whereof you stand guilty before him, and in the Courts of your own Consciencs? do they teach you to pray unto God, in and through the merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ for his special grace, that He will *incline your hearts to keep his Laws*, better for the time to come.

For mine own part, I do declare my self freely to all the World, how indifferent soever, I am contented to be accounted in other matters, which are but meerly circumstantial and arbitrable by common Authority; yet without prejudice to any Person, or Parry, I do solemnly declare it in the presence of God, and in the face of this Christian Congregation, That I cannot see good grounds for my self, or any other Person professing Christianity, to hold Communion with any Society whatsoever, where the People are not put in continual remembrance of the *Vow and Covenant* which they have made with God in their *Baptism*: where they have neither *Creed*, nor *Lords Prayer*, nor *Ten Commandments*, nor the *Doctrine* of the *Sacraments* expounded: much less the same Sacraments, I mean of Baptism and the Lords Supper, administered according to the order and form, the judgment and practice of the Primitive Church. For how can I, or any man or woman, seriously and in good earnest professing Christianity, venture our Salvation

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vation in such a Communion, where the faith once delivered unto the Saints, is not openly confessed with the mouth, so well as they pretend to believe it in their hearts: especially, seeing the great Apostle speaks it so plainly, *That with the Heart Man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession of faith is made unto Salvation, Rom. 10. 10.*

I abhor such foolish Whimfies, to say no better; and such horrid and dangerous *Enthusiasmes*, to call them no worse, which prefer every odd and idle fancy of any particular man or Minister whatsoever, to the received Doctrine and Practice of the Universal or holy Catholick Church. And so much the more for that the Apostle Saint *Peter* tells us plainly, that, no Prophesy of Scripture is of any private interpretation or resolution, *2 Pet. 1. 20.* And surely, if it be an absurd imposition of the Council, or rather Convention of *Trent*, to change the Rule of the Christian Faith, by Equiparating unwritten Traditions, with the very written word of God, can we judge it less absurd in our Novellists at home; who will have so many Creeds, as Heads, though never so contradictory each to other. Beloved, saith Saint *Jude*, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the Common Salvation; it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints, *Ver. 3.* It was ever held
for

S. ff. 4.

Decreto 1.

for a good Rule, whereby to understand the legality of any practice, or to try the truth of any Doctrine, which *Vincentius Lerinensis* gives: *Id tenendum quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus Creditum est; Id tandem facimus, si sequamur Antiquitatem, Universitatem, Consensum.* That is to be held; which hath been believed alwayes, every where, and of all. And that we do, if we follow Antiquity, Universality and Consent.

When *Simon Magus, Ebion, Cerinthus, Menander, Carpocrates*, with the *Gnosticks* & other hereticks, forsook the communion of the holy Catholick Church, *Iustin Martyr* and *St. Irenaus* tells us what became of them; how they ran into those excesses that the followers of *Simon Magus* worshipped him as the Son of God that appeared unto the *Jews* in *Samaria*. And *Irenaus*, after *Iustin Martyr*, saith, that *Simon Magus* is said to be honoured of *Claudius Caesar*; of many he was glorified as God; he Taught, that himself was he, who, as the Son appeared amongst the *Jews*, that in *Samaria* he descended as the Father, and amongst other Nations, he came as the Holy Ghost. That himself also was the highest Power, (*i. e.*) him who above and over all things, is the Father, (*ὁ παρ' ἐρμηνος ἐπὶ πάντα κτίσματα θεός*) so exalting himself above all that is called God, he also suffered himself to be called whatsoever men called him, Who is the Father Eternal. Moreover that his Trull *Helena*, whom he called his *ἑνὴν πρῶτην*, or prime conceit, or principle did with him generate Angels and Powers,

*Iustin Martyr
Secunda Apologia per
Christianis.*

*Irenaus lib. 1.
cap. 20.*

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ers, of whom he also said, that this world was made, that according to his Grace men were saved, that the God of the *Jews* was one of the Angels Created by him the said *Simon*; and the said Holy Father *St. Irenaeus* in his 22 Chapter of his first book against Heresies, chargeth the aforesaid *Simon Magus* to have said, *that he was the only Father, who hath made Angels and Arch-Angels, Virtues and Powers; that his Picture or Figure was made according to the figure of Jupiter, and of Selena (or without doubt of Helena, as Dr. Hammond notes) after the figure of Minerva; and these were to be worshipped, Chap. 21.* So *Tertullian* in his *Treatise de Anima*, or of the Soul, tells us, *How that Simon Magus was called of his followers, The Highest or Sovereign Father.*

Beloved, I beseech you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, to consider with your selves the dangerous and pernicious consequents of making Rents and Schismes in the body of Christ, which is the Church. It is a wonder if the Schismatick do find center till he become an obstinate Heretick, or desperate Blasphemer; witness that of *Hacket*, who at his very Execution in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, died Blaspheming. What should I speak of others in our own times? know, that out of Church, there is no Salvation. That the Church is known to be a true Spouse of Christ, by that Faith and true Allegiance which she bears unto Christ. This Faith is the Faith of Christ Crucified, which she is not ashamed to confess with open mouth in the face of all the world. Into this Faith she Baptized

tizeth all them whom he listeth under the banner of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the defence of this faith, which our holy Mother the Church of *England* professeth, at this time dyed all the Holy Apostles and Martyrs, viz. Saint *Peter*, St. *Paul*, Saint *James*, Saint *John*, and Saint *Jude*, and all the rest of the Apostles. This is that same faith which was born witness unto by the first four General Councils. Namely, the first Council of *Nice*, called under *Constantine* the great, wherein *Arius* and his adherents, who denyed the Divinity of the Son of God, were condemned for Hereticks. So the Council of *Constantinople*, holden fourty years after that first Council of *Nice*, under the Emperour *Theodosius* the Elder, against *Macedonius* the Heretick, who denyed the God-head of the Holy Ghost. And the first of *Ephesus*, summoned by *Theodosius* the Younger, against *Nestorius*, who affirmed two Persons in Christ. Lastly, the Council of *Calcedon*, called and convened under *Martian* the Emperour, against *Eutyches*, who asserted that there was but one Nature in Christ, made up of the Divine and Humane.

Council of *Nice*
consisting of
318. Bishops.
Anno Dom.
326.

Of *Constantinople*.
noble 400.
Bishops and upwards.
Anno Dom.
383.

Of *Ephesus*
300 Bishops.
Anno Dom.
451.

At *Calcedon*
600 Bishops.
Anno Dom.
451.

All these Councils held and determined the same most holy Faith, which is received in the Church of *England*, which we have in our Liturgy, or Publick Service, under the Names and Titles of the Apostles, *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds. In the defence and maintenance hereof, dyed the renowned Saint *Athanasius*, Saint *Cyprian*,

E

Irenaeus,

Cranmer was
Arch-Bishop of
Canterbury.
Ridley Bishop
of London.
Latimer of
Worcester.
Hooper of
Glocester.
Farmer of St.
David.

Jerreus, and other the Holy and Learned Fa-
thers of the Primitive Church. And to come
nearer home to our own times, these Goly Learn-
ed Bishops, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Far-
rar, and those Godly Ministers also, Saunders,
Taylor, Bradford, and many others under the Ma-
nyan Persecution, sealed this same holy Primitive
Catholick and Apostolick Faith, with their dear-
est heart-blood.

Not to trouble you with the instances of ma-
ny faithful Confessours, and Martyrs, of a more
Modern date, whose blood cannot chuse, but run
fresh in most of our Memories.

All these I assure you dyed in the same faith,
which our Church hath taught us, and doth still
continue in teaching us to believe: though here-
unto too many I fear in our times, who would be
thought, to be somewhat more wise then their
Neighbours, are too great Strangers. This is
that Faith upon which our Church is built, and
against which the Gates of Hell shall never be a-
ble to prevaile.

*Hac revelatio
Patris est: hoc
Ecclesia fun-
damentum est:
hac securitas
aternitatis est.
Nunc Regni
caelorum habes
clavem: a hinc
terrena ejus
iudicia caelesti-
a sunt. Billac.
lib. 6. de Trinit.

Though the Church be shaken by many con-
fusions and disorders: yet her Faith, the best se-
curity of Eternity, is not shaken. No! that remains
still the same, and so will do by the grace of God,
until the Angel in the Revelation shall proclaim
that time shall be no more. And now to con-
clude,

If

If any will forsake our Communion, while we stand upon these terms, I may justly say of them, as Saint Ignatius said of the old *Gnosticks*, and Disciples of Old *Simon* the Witch, once and again before mentioned, Εἰ γὰρ ἦσαν τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ οἱ ἀλλοιοί, καὶ ἂν ἦσαν ἐχθροὶ τῷ σωτῆρι καὶ χριστῷ. If they had been true and genuine branches of God the Father; they would never have been Enemies of the Cross of Christ.

But if in nothing else, I may prevail with those who do dissent from us; yet let them be perswaded whiles they have a Liberty, not to use it, or rather not to abuse it as a Cloak of Malitiousness, Treason, or Rebellion; nor to Maintain any lewed Principles: nor to set on foot any Malignant Practises against God, or the King; Church, or State, Friends or Foes; But rather as becometh good Christians, so let them demean themselves in all Places, and upon all occasions, and amongst all Companies as the Servants of God. *As free, and not using; or not having the Liberty for a Cloak of Malitiousness, but as the Servants of God.*

I know you expect somewhat to be said unto Persons in Authority, by way of Advice; but I have not had time to tumble over a Concordance according to the new mode of those who are hugely affected with the long-winded Cant. howbeit, I shall not refuse to commend unto you two or three very pertinent places of Scripture to the purpose of your expectation.

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The first shall be that in *Exod. 18. 21.* which contains *Jethro's Counsel unto Moses*, which sheweth you, that you must endeavour to approve your selves able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating Covetousness.

The second shall be that of *David*, *2 Sam. 23. 3.* He that Ruleth over men must be Just, Ruling in the fear of God: Remember you bear not the Sword in vain, *Rom. 13. 4.* The Magistrate is *Gestas utriusque tabule*, the Keeper of the two Tables of the Ten Commandments: and however your Sword may not reach all causes; yet so far as lyeth in your power, let not disorderly living pass without such punishments as are consistent with Christian Charity.

You need not that much more should be said by me at this instant; the Laws of God, and the known Laws of the Land, and the Constitutions of your own Society must direct you when this discourse of mine may be forgotten. Let your own good example in frequenting the house of God, together with your own Families, according to the Order of the Church of *England* by Law established, and your own Grave, unblameable, and discreet deportment, put a blank upon dissenters. And if the Rabble will needs cast scorn upon the Wisdom of God, shining forth upon you in the Ministry of your Lawful Pastor Ordained and Constituted amongst you in due form and order of Law, according to the known Laws

Laws of this Realm, and the Canons and Constitutions of the Church of *England*, piously and wholesomely made and provided; It is your part and duty in especial manner to support and countenance him against all affronts and indignities, which a factious and head-strong, a Slanderous and Scandalizing Generation may cast upon him.

And for you that are *sub potestate Constituti*, under the command of Authority; I shall give you that same wholesome advise which follows immediately after the words of my Text: *Honour all men; Love the Brother-hood; Fear God, Honour the King*: On which words I shall make no other Paraphrase than what the Church of *England* hath made to my hand in her most excellent and plain Catechism. You shall next to the performance of your Duty towards God in believing in him, Fearing him, Loving him above all, Worshipping him, giving him Thanks, putting your whole Trust in him, Calling upon him, Honouring his Holy Name, and his Word, and serving him truly all the days of your lives. You shall, I say, next to the performance of your duty in this manner towards God, not forget your duty towards your Neighbour; (that is to say) You shall love your Neighbour as your self, and do unto all men, as thou would'st he should do unto thee. Thou shalt Love, Honour, and Succour thy Father and Mother. Thou shalt Honour and Obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him. Thou shalt submit thy self

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to all thy Governours, Teachers; Spiritual Pastors, and Masters. Thou shalt order thy self Lowly and Reverently to all thy Betters. Thou shalt hurt no body by Word nor Deed. Thou shalt be True and Just in all thy dealings. Thou shalt bear no Malice nor Hatred in thy heart. Thou shalt keep thy Hands from picking and stealing, and thy Tongue from Evil-speaking, Lying, and Slandering. Thou shalt keep thy Body in temperance, Soberness and Chastity. Thou shalt not Covet nor desire other mens Goods; but shalt learn and labour truly to get thine own Living, and to do thy Duty in that state of Life, unto which it hath pleased God to call thee. This is pure Religion, and Undeiled before God and the Father indeed. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same, Rom. 13.3. For as St. Peter saith, 1 Per. 3. 13. Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? I beseech you Consider what is spoken, and the Lord give you understanding in all things necessary, in order to the Attainment of Everlasting Salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and but One God, be ascribed and rendered, as of all due belongeth, all Honour and Glory, Praise, Power, Might, Majesty, Thanksgiving, Dominion, and Obedience, both of us, and of every Creature, both now and for ever more. Amen.

F F N I S.

